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# DOJ asked to investigate sexual misconduct at Tutwiler

1:00 PM, May. 22, 2012 | Comments



Written by **Matt Okarmus**

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The Equal Justice Initiative (EJI), a private nonprofit organization, has asked the Department of Justice to look into allegations of sexual misconduct at a women's prison in Wetumpka.

In the complaint filed Tuesday, EJI calls for a federal investigation into "widespread sexual abuse of women prisoners by male guards" at Tutwiler Prison for Women. The group claims to have interviewed more than 50 women incarcerated at the prison, finding evidence of officer-on-inmate sexual violence in the results.

One finding in the complaint alleges that several incarcerated women have become pregnant after being raped by prison guards.

EJI Executive Director Bryan Stevenson wrote the letter to the Department of Justice.

"Rape and sexual assault of incarcerated women is criminal and an outrageous abuse of power," Stevenson stated. "Any failure by state and federal officials to respond quickly and appropriately to reports of sexual violence will contribute to tragic and shameful conditions of confinement for women."

Other findings in the complaint allege that evidence shows Alabama officials are under-reporting the number of incidents of sexual assault, punitive responses to allegations of sexual abuse have created "an atmosphere of intimidation" and discourage inmate complaints of sexual misconduct and that Tutwiler's failure to enforce restrictions on the ability of male correctional officers to view nude inmates creates "an increased and unnecessary risk" of sexual misconduct and abuse.

Brian Corbett, public information manager for the Alabama



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Department of Corrections, said they had no comment regarding the allegations as of Tuesday afternoon.

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